

Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 15, 2007

Raised Bill No. 7034

An Act Concerning Collective Bargaining Rights for In-Home State Subsidized Day Care Providers

My name is Quenette Pugh. I live in Bridgeport and I run a licensed in-home daycare. I have done so for 16 years.

I urge you to support Raised Bill No. 7034, An Act Concerning Collective Bargaining Rights For In-Home State Subsidized Day Care Providers.

I take pride in my job and I love what I do. I wake up at 5:15 every morning prepare for a fun, educational day with the children in my day care and at 6:30 I open the door with a smile as parents begin to drop their children off. These parents depend me to be a part of their child's educational and social development. That is a role I take very seriously, so I send out a calendar once a month to parents letting them know what each child is doing and their progress.

There are days that I am an educator, a doctor, and a therapist all in one. I teach the children manners - wave hello, help others, share, don't hit. I teach the children to spell, to recognize shapes and colors, and more. I provide a wide variety of toys, musical instruments and educational materials for the children so they can grow and learn. I work one on one with the children every day to prepare them for their future as students, as friends, and as citizens.

For all of this I earn only \$4.11 an hour. Sometimes I earn less because parents are unable to pay their share of the weekly payment. From that \$4.11 per hour is used to pay for educational materials and toys for the children, food, utilities and all of the other expenses that come along with running a licensed in-home day care facility. I have health insurance through my husband, but it is not good. I am given only \$1000.00 per year to cover all of my medical expenses. I am one of the lucky ones. I have met in-home day care providers who have no insurance at all.

I know I am not alone in my concerns for the children and families served by in-home day care providers. We want to give the best we can for them, but we are cursed with

limited funds, the unneeded stress of not having affordable, quality, comprehensive health insurance, and little or no access to training. I know the situation could be better. With collective bargaining we could raise standards for everyone and prevent a growing childcare crisis in Connecticut. Give us the freedom to collectively bargain through a representative of our choice. I am asking you to support Raised Bill No. 7034.

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